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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Extension Service
Washington 25, D. C.

April 29, 1947

For administrative use only

TO ALL STATE EXTENSION DIRECTORS:

Subject: Current Farm Labor News - #12

Along with this letter I am enclosing material relating to return of Agricultural Placement to State Employment Services, taken from House Appropriations Committee hearings on the Department of Labor-Federal Security Agency appropriation bill for 1948.

John H. Davis, executive secretary, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, had the following to say on Farm Labor when he testified before the House Committee on Agriculture, on April 23, 1947:

"The National Council recommends the following farm labor policy.

- "1. A national migratory farm labor program administered by a single branch of the Department of Agriculture.
- "2. At the federal level the agency would assemble and disseminate information as to farm labor needs, farm labor surplus, conditions and terms of employment in the various states; and assist in inter-state recruitment.
- "3. The state offices should assemble the same information for their respective states, and should handle their own recruitment and placement; and should work with the federal agency in case of farm labor surplus or deficiencies within the state boundaries to secure optimum distribution of needed workers.
- "4. In no event should either federal or state agencies be given the right to control movements of workers or employers, to fix wages or working conditions, or to pay transportation costs. The state agency should have the right on its own volition to supervise needed health services, recreation programs and take over and operate public camps.
- "5. Authority should be granted the Department of Agriculture to import foreign workers into the United States, but only in the event there is not an adequate supply of domestic farm labor within the continental United States."

New 20-page Great Plains States Wheat and Small Grains Harvest Guide was mailed to the 10 participating states April 25. The supply is for immediate use. Reserve supply will follow. Newspaper mats for use with releases publicizing harvest program were mailed April 26. Copy of guide enclosed for your study.

Western Harvest Guide--"Farm Jobs Along Western Highways"--is due off press week of May 5. Newspaper mats for use in publicity will go forward about same time.

Six states have not replied to the April 3 request concerning newspaper mats for publicizing the Central Harvest labor guide. We will appreciate prompt action by those desiring copies, since the order must be placed with mat maker on May 7.

In Georgia, State Farm Labor Supervisor Smith indicates labor supply will not be any better in 1947 than it was last year. Demand for spring help, he says, "equals that of war years in many counties and is above war peak in others. Percentage of veterans and war plant workers seeking farm employment is relatively small".

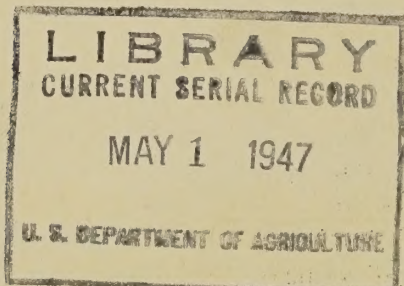
Oregon counties report women commencing to play more important part in farm labor requirements, especially in training hops. One office has a reserve list of women workers which it expects will take care of much increased demand during hop training season. Lane county reports growers prefer nimble fingered efficiency of women for lighter jobs. Oregon's strawberry acreage is expected to jump to 11,000 acres this year. This will be increase of 500 acres since 1946.

State Supervisor Tucker, Virginia, reports "Extension Service plans to start child-care program including supervised recreation, rest periods and hot lunch for children of migratory families". Counties concerned, growers, and local organizations will cooperate in project.

Iowa farmers and farm workers are becoming definitely more particular about filling jobs now open on farms, State Supervisor Fitzsimmons reports. He expects this attitude to prevail through 1947. Farmers want workers who will stay long periods. Workers likewise want to get settled permanently in good spot. Housing continues to be big stumbling block.

In Colorado's northern and northeastern district, labor is coming in rapidly, filling up available housing and waiting for work to begin, says State Supervisor Hamman. Much activity in construction and repairing of housing for labor. Weld county reports material taken out in a week for 13 new houses, 18 additions and 35 repair jobs.

Upsurge in farm labor placements, January 1-April 5 in the state of Washington, indicates 1947 will be a big year, according to State Supervisor Zuger. Total on April 5 ran to 8,547 compared with 3,545 in 1944, 10,236 in 1945 and 6,960 in 1946 for the same period.



Yours very truly,

Meredith C. Wilson

Meredith C. Wilson
Deputy Director of Extension
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Enclosures

(copy to state supervisors)